

121. Disabilities of Pulayas in the matter of education.

Mr. Aiyar Kali (Member, Nominated) represented that, though the Government were trying their best to promote the welfare of the backward communities, there was a fall of 295 students of the Pulaya community in 1995. He pointed out that, unless Government took special care of the poor Pulayas, their condition would not change for the better. The Member requested that scholarships might be given to all the Pulaya boys and girls that were studying in the schools and that full fee concession be granted to them. He also suggested that some industrial schools be opened to the members of his community and that orders be issued to the heads of the Education, Medical, Forest, Police, Registration, Judicial and Engineering departments to give appointments to the members of the Pulaya community.

Dewan's reply.—The Member is referred to the reply given to Mr. Daivathan.

VIII. RELIGIOUS AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

122. Some proposals for improving the administration of Devaswoms under Government control.

Mr. Trivikramar Vasudevar (Member, Jenmi, Padmanabhapuram Division) represented that all the Devaswoms, now known as Sirkar, originally belonged to private individuals and that endowments had been made by them to those Devaswoms for their maintenance. After some time, however, the affairs of the Devaswoms came to be grossly mismanaged with the result that their management was assumed by the Sirkar in 987 M. E. It was stated that Government took that step for the better management of the institutions concerned. But, whatever might be the reason, it was clear that the revenue derived from the Devaswoms was much more than what was estimated by the Land Revenue department in 1088. As most of the Devaswom lands were from time to time dealt with as Sirkar lands and as no separate accounts of the receipts and the expenditure of the institutions were maintained, it was not possible at the present time to determine with any degree of accuracy the extent of lands which originally belonged to them or the revenue derived therefrom. Though that was so, the fact remained that the income derived from the Devaswom lands was more than sufficient to meet the expenditure for their maintenance and that the surplus had merged into the State land revenue to a very considerable extent. As there was a general impression that the Sirkar Devaswoms were being maintained out of the general revenues, it was time for the Government to remove the misunderstanding by making a declaration to the effect that the Devaswoms are not only self-supporting but also that they had yielded a large surplus, which had, however, merged in the State Land Revenue.

The Member then referred to the deplorable condition of some Devaswom buildings and the mismanagement of some of those institutions, and said that it was highly necessary to separate their supervision from the Land Revenue department and to entrust their management to local Committees consisting of the descendants of the donors of Devaswom lands, under the superintendence of Government. He also said that, in revising the *pathivus* of Devaswoms, the quantities of articles fixed in the old *pathivu* should on no account be reduced. He then suggested that the Tahsildars should be empowered to incur the necessary expenditure in respect of unforeseen ceremonies such as *Suddhi*, etc., to avoid delay in the performance of *poojas*, caused by the delay in getting the sanction of Government. He requested that the reports of the late Mr. Ramachandra Rao and the Devaswom Separation Committee might be published.

123. Separation of Devaswoms from the Land Revenue Department and the transfer of the management of Devaswom properties to Hindu Trustees.

Mr. T. C. Kesava Pillai (Member, Vilavankod Taluk) began by saying that the Devaswoms were, at the time of their origin, largely endowed by pious caste Hindus, that those endowments were being managed by their descendants independent of the State, and that the Government took up the management of the Devaswoms only

in 987 M. E. After the assumption of such management, the Government did not take care to keep the Devaswom properties distinct from the Sirkar properties, with the result that most of the Devaswom lands came to be treated as Sirkar lands. Government had no legal right to assume those Devaswoms, since the Religious Endowments Regulation came into force only in 1079. But, irrespective of the question whether the said act on the part of Government was legal or not, the Member said that the donors were not consulted in their management, and that some of the Major and Minor Devaswoms had already disappeared and their properties had gradually merged in the Sirkar.

The Member then endeavoured to prove that the amount shown in the State accounts as Devaswom Revenue was not correct, that the income was really much more, and that, if there was increase in the State Revenue, there was increase in the Devaswom Revenue also. This would be borne out by the valuable report of the late Mr. Ramachandra Rao which, the Member requested, might be published. He complained that the Devaswoms were being grossly mismanaged, that in revising the *pathivus* of the Devaswoms the expenditure under *Akathepaditharam* and more especially under *Purathepaditharam* was curtailed to such an extent as to make it inadequate for the satisfactory performance of the ceremonies. The Member then urged the necessity of separating the Devaswoms from the Land Revenue department and leaving their entire management in the hands of trustees as in British India.

He also requested that, with a view to secure the efficient management of the institutions concerned, the following points might be considered :—

1. that Committees be appointed to prepare a list of the Devaswom lands which had been treated as Sirkar at the last Settlement;
2. that only duly qualified men be appointed as *Santhies* and *Tantries* and;
3. that the word 'Hindu' be deleted from the Hindu Religious Endowments Regulation, III of 1079, and the Regulation be given wider scope.

124. Devaswoms—their existing condition and the advantages and disadvantages of their separation from the Land Revenue Department.

Mr. S. Subrahmanya Pillai (Member, Municipal Council, Vaikam) began by describing how the Devaswoms were originally owned by private individuals who made considerable endowments to them, how in course of time they drifted into mismanagement and how they were assumed by the Sirkar in 987 M. E. The Member stated that the revenue derived from those lands at the time of their assumption by Government was not only sufficient to meet the expenditure on those institutions, but that the surplus which amounted to 8 lakhs of rupees used to be credited to the State funds. As neither a list of the Devaswom lands nor the income derived therefrom was maintained, the Member said that most of the Devaswom lands came in course of time to be treated as Sirkar lands and that process in the change of tenure was perfected at the last Settlement. The result was that the income derived from the Devaswom lands dwindled to Rs. 3½ lakhs, which was the figure now shown in the State accounts. That gave rise to the prevailing misconception among the non-Hindu and non-caste Hindu subjects of His Highness the Maha Raja that the expenditure on Devaswoms which had in recent years increased to about 5 times the revenue shown in the State accounts was being met out of the general revenues. To remove that misconception, the Member suggested that Government should make a declaration that the Devaswom revenue was more than sufficient to meet the expenditure on them and that the surplus was being added to the State Revenue. He requested that the orders of Government on the report of the Devaswom Separation Committee might be issued only after it had been published and public criticism invited thereon. He also urged that the report of Mr. Ramachandra Rao, now a sealed book, should be published along with the report of the Devaswom Separation Committee.

The Member also contended that there was no necessity to appoint Christian members on the Committee and added that the public were not disposed to place much value on the recommendations of such a Committee, whatever they